

CHRIS BANKS

Life is more than 'one thing'

The Lincoln Journal-Star doesn't claim to have "all the news that's fit to print" as the New York Times does, but sometimes I wonder about what I read in it. Though I usually confine myself to the sports section and the front page, I dissected the entire paper Saturday.

It was full of the usual stuff like weddings, play reviews and advice columns. Just when I was ready to conclude the local paper wasn't worth the effort to read, one headline caught my eye: "Car filled with trash and rats scares schoolchildren."

Last week in Cincinnati, a group of little girls came across a car. When they looked in its back window, they began screaming in horror. Amidst the jam-packed garbage in the vehicle, several rats had made their homes. Apparently, the sight of the vermin scurrying about the trash was more frightening to the girls than the car's owner, Maria Grueter.

I initially laughed at this story, pondering what articles the paper cut to make room for this earth-shattering news. However, I soon began wondering about Grueter, who made the trash-filled vehicle her home.

When the police found her, she was sent to the hospital and then placed in the custody of a relative. Why would someone live in a car with so much trash that fitting into the driver's seat was a contortionist's nightmare?

According to Curley from the movie "City Slickers," the meaning of life is just "one thing." Each person has to find their own "one thing." After that, nothing else matters. Grueter was a teacher. Once she retired, she began living in her car and became a true pack rat, afraid to throw away anything from the past. Maybe when she retired, she lost the meaning in her life.

Reading about Grueter got me thinking. Maybe there is a danger in placing too much stock in "one thing." When that "one thing" is gone, what do you have left?



People who wash their hands 50 times a day, or can't leave their house because they worry it will get dirty, need to find a new hobby.

Finding meaning in life is important. After all, life only has the meaning we put in it.

We must all make some things important in life, but we should choose these things carefully and make sure we stay grounded in reality.

I've learned not to place too much faith in money. You could end up in court, or, even worse, become like my friend Evan. He'd buy property from an old lady in a nursing home who needed money fast to pay for an operation, and then he'd sell it for twice what he paid later that afternoon.

Money will fail you. Sooner or later, you'll probably end up broke like me. If money is everything to you, you have nothing when it's gone.

If you focus on money, you could get so wrapped up in your career, your life would revolve around getting that next promotion. Imagine power-lunching your way through life. Besides, money can't buy love or success; it only rents them. Just look at Donald Trump.

Beware of basing your life on things you can't control. Remember how you felt Jan. 27? I was devastated by the Huskers' loss to Florida State, and there was nothing I could do about it. No matter how many times I beat the 'Noles on Bill Walsh's Sega Football, I couldn't change the real score. My roommate contemplated suicide, or at least becoming a soccer fan. One day I hope Nebraska gets the Big One, but I'd be better off not placing so much emphasis on football.

When you do choose something to believe in, never get violent about it. Jeff Gilooly is going to jail for getting too caught up in his ex-wife's skating career. Tonya Harding will likely suffer this week even if she didn't participate in her husband's scheme to break Nancy Kerrigan's kneecap. Nothing's that important.

Most importantly, don't get eccentric. No matter how important beekeeping is to you, most other people probably won't get it. That's OK, but if you start bathing in honey because you love bees so much, others probably have reason to worry.

Closely related to eccentricity, is obsessive-compulsive behavior. Though my roommate jokes that I brush my teeth too often, I think I'm safe here. But people who wash their hands 50 times a day, or can't leave their house because they worry it will get dirty, need to find a new hobby.

We all need to find something in life to keep us going. The world would be pretty boring with nothing to care about. However, remember there is life outside your own little world.

People who base their lives on one thing miss out on everything else. Diversify and enjoy life. Just remember, if you don't get that job you wanted or your marble collection gets stolen, you can always spend some time with card games, ant farms or good books. Life's full of opportunities.

Banks is a junior political science major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

CINDY LANGE-KUBICK

Jogging pain eased by fantasy

I am jogging. It's a beautiful February morning. The endorphins are starting to kick in, and I'm feeling fine.

I'm thinking, something I still manage to do on occasion, and the thoughts tumble out one on top of the other. My mind is outpacing my Nikes, and as I round the three-mile mark, I'm heavily into fantasyland.

Putting one foot mindlessly in front of the other for 30 minutes a day lends itself to psychosis. Instead of tuning into Ace of Base, I tune out of reality. Call it cheap entertainment; call it neurotic; but chances are, if you see me out pounding the pavement, I'm not all there.

My ruminations vary depending on my state of mind and time of year. Sometimes I see Ed McMahon holding that oversized \$10 million check with my name on it. I can run for hours spending that one. Around the first week of May, I spend my study hours fantasizing that I've come down with a virulent case of the Beijing flu, and my professors all feel so bad they excuse me from taking finals.

In today's fantasy, a New York copy editor has miraculously come across some of my Daily Nebraskan columns and deemed them worthy of the Times. The editor pictures me as a younger Erma Bombeck and wants to begin grooming me as her replacement. Or maybe he sees me as a Midwestern Anna Quindlan, I'm not sure. The important thing is that I have been discovered, and easy street lies right outside my door.

Isn't it amazing the trips you can take right in your own neighborhood?

A car honks and brakes lock on the gravelled streets of my hometown. I look up, still lost in my illusion, and wave to my adoring fans as I cross the street. And you thought those runners wearing Walkmans were a traffic hazard? As Dan Quayle once so ineptly paraphrased, "a mind is a dangerous thing to lose," especially when you're crossing 17th Street during rush hour.

Fearing for my life, I force myself



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to come back into the present.

Back to New York. Soon I am syndicated, and folks all over the country are chuckling over my Sunday morning columns. My mug shot is there on page 12, section B, see it? Right below Donald Kaul and to the left of Ellen Goodman. I look good. I sound good. The money is rolling in.

Of course I remain as modest and self-effacing as ever. When Connie Chung calls for an interview, I attribute my demeanor to my stable upbringing and the calming influence of the Plains.

I hate to admit it, but this is a pattern for me. As a kid, I used to shut myself up in the hall closet, climb up to the top shelf (it was a big closet) and sit eating saltines and salami, reading a book and pretending to be Laura Ingalls in her dug-out or Anne Frank hiding from the German soldiers.

And I can distinctly remember walking home from grade school, daydreaming about being one of 10 people left on the planet after some cataclysmic explosion had wiped out the rest of the human race. I spent many aimless afternoons, swinging my book bag, avoiding cracks in the sidewalk and determining who got to share a piece of the earth with me.

Being an egocentric 10-year-old, I got to choose the lucky few. Let's see, my best friend, Kelly, Mom and Dad, David Cassidy

Later, in junior high, I would lock the bathroom door, jump on the counter and blow imaginary smoke rings at

the mirror while viewing myself from all angles, searching for the best head shot to send Tiger Beat magazine. Tapping nonexistent ashes into the sink, I would feign silent laughter as I charmed Hollywood talent scouts.

And singing along to the radio I was sure I had Linda Ronstadt topped hands-down. If only I had the right connections, I'd be the one up on stage belting out "Baby, you're no good."

I know what you're thinking. And I'm sure you're right. If you checked your copy of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, I'd be listed somewhere between Dementia and Narcissistic Personality Disorder. But what the heck, we're all in there somewhere.

As I near home, I'm working out a book deal with my publishers, McGraw-Hill. It's going to be 30 of my best columns titled "On the Cutting Edge with Cindy." It's a lame title, I know. I wanted "Lange-Kubick Can't Say That, Can She?" but Molly Ivins beat me to it.

I walk in the front door, sweaty but triumphant. The phone is ringing. Probably Letterman. My husband yells at me from the kitchen, "Cindy, it's your editor at the DN. She says your last column was unintelligible; you're going to have to redo it."

Suddenly I have shin splints and a backache. Who needs reality anyway?

Lange-Kubick is a senior news-editorial and sociology major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.



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Introduction to Microsoft Word for Macintosh

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In a recent column, humorist Erma Bombeck wrote, "There are only two things worth remembering: your Social Security Number and the formula for your hair dye."

She neglected to include a third: your Personal Identification Number (PIN).

At the same time, Bombeck named things she

Remember your PIN

thought you could forget: your ring size; how much pressure you use in your tires; and the names of the seven dwarfs. (It's OK to forget your mother's age, too, she says.)

Take Erma's advice. Take an inventory of what you have stored in memory and then "clean house."

But...Remember your PIN!



It's da taste.



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